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Results With Special Crops in the Piedmont Section in 1922

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The tremendous losses from the ravages of the boll weevil have forced the farmers of the Piedmont Section of Georgia to supplement a part of their acreage formerly in cotton with some other cash crop. Few of them realized, however, how difficult it would be to find some other dependable cash crop until they had tried to get money out of some new crop or some new line of farming.

In an effort to determine which crops were showing the greatest promise in the Piedmont section a brief survey was made in December to find out what returns the farmers had gotten from special crops in 1922.

Many crops were tried out with varied success. Most of the crops were not entirely new to the farmers for they had been grown for local use in a small way, but as strictly a commercial proposition they were new to the Piedmont section. Much difficulty was experienced in disposing of some of the special crops. This was due in part to a lack of knowledge of the right kind of product to produce and partly to the lack of knowledge of methods of marketing.

The effort to market a big per cent of the special crops in the Piedmont section in 1922 was a dismal failure. Few farmers knew where, when or how to sell their products. Many farmers tried to handle their crops without sufficient knowledge, the same as they had been accustomed to do with cotton. They tried the markets at New York, Tampa, Fla., and other places, and as a result of this hit or miss method many not only did not make any money, but a large number lost money.

Peanuts gave better returns in 1922 generally than any other special crop. On sixteen farms with a total of 1,353 acres an aver-

age of $27\frac{1}{2}$ bushels of peanuts and $\frac{1}{3}$ of a ton of peanut hay were produced per acre. Yields ranged from 14 to 40 bushels per acre. The selling price ranged from \$90.00 to \$125.00 per ton. They were grown mostly on red and gray lands. In most cases no fertilizer was used. The quality of the nuts was excellent. While the price paid for peanuts in 1922 was above normal, the protective tariff in effect now should be some protection against extremely low prices.

Soy Beans were the most outstanding and most promising forage crop grown in 1922. While the acreage was not large, the yields were very satisfactory. On twelve farms, with a total of 86 acres of O-too-tan soy beans, an average of 3,300 pounds of hay and $8\frac{3}{4}$ bushels of seed were produced. These yields were produced with very little rain. In some cases one ton of hay was produced per acre where cowpeas did not get high enough to cut because of long drought. The soy beans will also withstand more extremes of wet than cowpeas.

It is very likely that the soy bean is destined to replace the cowpea in the Piedmont section. The O-too-tan is meeting with much favor as a hay crop and soil builder. The principal objection to it is that it is late in maturing. The Laredo soy bean is very similar to the O-too-tan, but is about six weeks earlier. This is a new variety but is showing great promise and is well adapted to north Georgia.

The Mung Bean seems to have given satisfactory returns. On six farms, with a total of 18 acres, an average of $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons of hay and five bushels of seed were produced. The principal objection seemed to be that the seed shatter badly. There seems to be no advantage of the Mung over the soy bean, except that it is claimed that rabbits will not eat the young plants, while they are very fond of soy beans.

Alfalfa has given good returns. On five farms, with a total of 35 acres, an average of three tons of hay per acre was obtained. While it costs little more to get started with alfalfa than with other hay crops it will last at least five years without reseeding, and three to five cuttings can be made each season.

Broom corn was somewhat disappointing because of the low yield. On two farms with a total of 212 acres an average of 100 pounds of brush per acre was obtained. The quality of the brush compared very favorably with that grown in the West. On account of a short crop broom corn sold for \$250.00 to \$400.00 per ton. Unless larger yields are obtained this would not be a satisfactory crop when prices are normal. Several different varieties were grown. The Tennessee Evergreen Standard was the most satisfactory.

Sunflowers were grown on only a small number of farms. On three farms, with a total of 161½ acres, the average yield of seed was 157 pounds per acre. On two farms no fertilizer was used. With the price of these seed around six cents per pound the returns would be low. On one farm 800 pounds of seed per acre were obtained. The Mammoth Russian variety was used on all three farms.

The tobacco crop did not come up to expectations. On five farms with a total of 145 acres an average of 234 pounds per acre was obtained. This is less than 1/3 the yield obtained by experienced South Georgia growers. Thirty-five acres were set out so late the yield was very low. Only half of the crop had been sold and this brought 10 to 15 cents per pound. Tobacco does not mature in the Piedmont in time to be sold on the south Georgia markets and is usually shipped to North Carolina markets. However tobacco can be grown successfully on some of the sandy soils in the Piedmont.

Truck crops of various kinds were grown in most all sections of the Piedmont. With the exception of a few communities that were well organized, there was more money lost on truck than was made on it. A big percent of farmers who shipped to distant markets did not even hear from their shipments unless they failed to pay freight. However, there were men who made good money on green beans, tomatoes, Irish potatoes; etc., which shows that money can be made with truck when grown right and marketed right.

On 470 acres of tomatoes, the average yield was 70 bushels which sold at an average of from fifty-five cents to one dollar per bushel, giving a return of \$38.50 to \$70.00 per acre. Yields ranged from 25 to 200 bushels per acre, with returns from nothing to \$150.00 per acre. Some of the varieties grown were Globe, Stone, Red Rock, Acme and Greater Baltimore. The Globe seemed to meet with most favor because it is a firm, smooth tomato and a good shipper. Most of the tomatoes were grown for late summer and fall shipment.

On 400 acres of green beans, the average yield was 70 bushels, which sold at an average of sixty cents to one dollar per bushel, giving a return of \$42.00 to \$70.00 per acre.

Yields ranged from 25 bushels to 300 bushels per acre and returns from nothing to \$400.00 per acre.

Some of the varieties grown were Simons, Giant and Burpee Stringless Green Pod, Red Valentine and Henderson's Round Stringless. Simon's Stringless Green Pod seemed to meet with most favor because of the long pods.

Most of the beans were grown for late summer and fall market. The bulk of the crop was shipped to Florida. Florida has recently

quarantined against all shipments of green beans and peas from the southern states because of the Mexican bean beetle. This will be a serious handicap to the bean grower unless the regulation is lifted or modified.

On five farms with a total of 14 acres of Irish potatoes, the average yield was 91 bushels and the returns \$87.34 per acre. Yields ranged from 32 bushels to 120 bushels per acre and selling price from 20c to \$2.50 per acre. The varieties grown were Lookout Mountain and Cobbler.

On seven farms with a total of 211 acres, the yield of Pimento peppers was 1½ tons per acre. The Griffin canning plant agreed to pay \$40.00 per ton while the Macon plant paid \$30.00 per ton. This is a good crop when grown on contract.

About 150 acres of English peas were grown in Meriwether County. Yields of about forty bushels of green peas in the pod and five bushels of dry peas per acre seemed to be the most common yields. The five bushels of dry peas was the amount allowed to mature after picking of green peas was discontinued. The English peas were shipped to all parts of the country and for the most part were a total loss, due largely to a lack of knowledge of marketing.

English peas are meeting with favor in Meriwether County as a hog crop. Yields of from fifteen to forty bushels of seed per acre were reported. They mature in April and come in fine for finishing off hogs for the spring market. This crop should go through most winters in middle Georgia. It may prove a valuable addition to the hog grazing crops in sections where it is not likely to be killed by hard freezes.

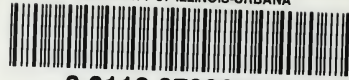
The dairy farmers, both those producing sweet cream and those producing sour cream, have not linked hogs with their cows except in a small number of cases. Many are buying a big per cent of their feed for their cows. These are two weak links—shortage of feed and lack of hogs.

While we did not get any actual figures on poultry, the complaint was very general that the hens were laying only a very few eggs at a time when eggs were selling for a good price. The right kind of feed and management would correct this condition to a large degree.

Our conclusion from this brief survey is that it is not best to abandon cotton entirely in the Piedmont section. Use it as a basic cash crop and work in other things as side lines.



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